

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SINGAP 02671 191110Z

15

ACTION ITFE-05

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 SSO-00 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15

IO-10 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 DODE-00 SR-02 ORM-01

AID-05 L-03 /065 W

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R 191020Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2861

INFO CINCPACREP GUAM

C O N F I D E N T I A L SINGAPORE 2671

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF VS PLOS SN GQ

SUBJECT: GUAM INTEREST IN VIETNAMESE FISHING VESSELS

REF: A. STATE 139957 B. STATE 1227

1. EMBASSY EFFORTS TO OBTAIN INFORMATION REQUESTED
REFTELS BEING FRUSTRATED BY EVASIVE RESPONSES AND DELAYING
TACTICS BY GOS OFFICIALS. DR. FONG, DEPUTY SECRETARY HOME
AFFAIRS (MINISTRY IN CHARGE OF REFUGEES), PROMISED EARLY
REPLY TO CHARGE'S VERBAL REQUEST FOR INFORMATION AND THE
TELEPHONED JUNE 19 TO SAY THAT MATTER CONCERNED A NUMBER OF
DEPARTMENTS OF GOVERNMENT, ESPECIALLY MINISTRY OF DEFENSE,
AND THAT EMBASSY SHOULD SUBMIT A WRITTEN REQUEST. SINGAPORE
NAVY COMMANDER REPLIED TO NAVATT INQUIRY BY SAYING THAT
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS RESPONSIBLE AGENCY AND WAS NOT
FORTHCOMING TO HIS REQUEST FOR INFORMATION. NAVATT'S EFFORTS
TO LOCATE FISHING BOATS AND SURVEY THEM FOR DAO LAUNCH HAVE
SO FAR BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL, BUT ARE CONTINUING.

2. COMMENT: EMBASSY HAS SUBMITTED WRITTEN REQUEST
TO HOME AFFAIRS AND WILL OF COURSE PERSIST IN EFFORT
TO OBTAIN THIS INFORMATION, BUT WE THINK GOS IS UNLIKELY
TO PROVIDE REQUESTED INFORMATION UNTIL IT HAS FIGURED
ALL THE ANGLES AND DECIDED WHETHER IT IS IN GOS INTEREST
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PAGE 02 SINGAP 02671 191110Z

TO DO SO. GOS FORCED MANY VIETNAMESE TO LEAVE THEIR

BOATS BEHIND WHEN THEY WERE PUT ABOARD LARGER VESSELS
AND PROBABLY RECONGIZES THAT LEGAL STATUS OF THESE BOATS
IS VERY UNCLEAR. IT IS UNLIKELY WE WILL RECEIVE INFORMATION
WE WANT UNTIL GOS KNOWS FULL EXTENT OF OUR INTEREST AND
WHAT WE ARE PREPARED TO DO TO OBTAIN THE BOATS. ALTHOUGH
GOS MAY BE WILLING TO YIELD THESE BOATS WITHOUT COMPEN-
SATION, BELIEVE IT WILL DEFER ACTION UNTIL FATE OF 960
VIETNAMESE REFUGEES ON ST. JOHN'S ISLAND IS DECIDED. TO
DATE US HAS BEEN EXTREMELY SLOW IN CLEARING CASES PROPOSED
BY UNHCR FOR PAROLE. BELEIVE GOS AT A MINIMUM WOULD USE
BOATS AS LEVER TO PERSUADE US TO MOVE MORE QUICKLY IN
ACCEPTING THESE REFUGEES AND MIGHT INSIST THAT WE TAKE ALL
OF THEM. FOR WHAT IT IS WORTH, NAVATT RECEIVED GENERAL
IMPRESSION FROM MIN DEF SOURCES DURING REFUGEE MOVEMENT INTO
AND OUT OF SINGAPORE WATERS IN MAY THAT THE LARGER, MORE
SEAWORTHY BOATS LEFT SINGAPORE FOR SUBIC AND GUAM, AND THAT THOSE
REMAINING ARE GENERALLY UNSEAWORTHY AND UNSERVICEABLE.
GRANT

NOTE BY OC/T: REFERENCE B AS RECEIVED.

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NNN

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